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Report : Petition of J. Friend

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S. Rep. No. 92, 44th Cong., 1st Sess. (1876)

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

FEBRUARY 23, 1876.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. CAPERTON submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill S. 387.]

The Committee on Claims, to whom was referred the petition of John S. Friend, praying remuneration for property taken from him by the Comanche Indians in Texas, in 1867 and 1868, have considered the same, and report as follows:

The petitioner alleges that he lived, as a stock-raiser, in one of the frontier counties of Texas, and that he had suffered much from depredations by marauding bands of Comanche Indians, taking from him at various times horses and other property, amounting in value to \$2,492, and upon one occasion attacking his family, mutilating in a shocking manner his wife, and taking captive his son, whom they held in captivity some four five years, subjecting him to great expense, as well on account of medical services rendered to his wife as in efforts to recover and restore to his home his son, amounting, in the whole, to some \$6,000.

This claim was presented to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, who replied that the case was one deserving favorable consideration, and recommended that it be presented to Congress. As the case comes before Congress with this recommendation, the committee deem it proper to say in reference to this and all like claims, that in their judgment, in the absence of treaty stipulation or special obligation on the part of the Government, the Government cannot and ought not to become the insurer of the lives and property of those who choose to undertake the hazards of a frontier life. It is certainly right and proper for the Government to afford all the guards in her power for the protection of her citizens against Indian incursions, by the aid of her military arm, but beyond this it would be unreasonable to require her to go. They, therefore, reject the claim of the petitioner, ask that they may be discharged from its further consideration, and that the bill accompanying the petition be indefinitely postponed.